

An essay on
Haemoptysis.
Respectfully Submitted
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By Hemoptysis is understood a discharge of blood from the lungs, or from some one or more of the vessels leading from them. It is generally preceded by precursory symptoms of greater or less intensity, which may be experienced for days before the hemorrhage commences, or they may be wholly wanting, when, however, they do occur, the patient will be found to complain of fullness of the chest with sudden flushes of heat, difficulty of breathing and palpitation of the heart. Inspiration is accomplished with difficulty and

a great deal of pain, while expiration is comparatively easy and brings momentary relief. The taste is peculiar and variable, as, bitter, sweet, saltish or as that of blood; generally it is sweet. Usually the patient is troubled with a dry hacking cough, and occasional chilliness, alternating with heat.

The discharge which is more or less irregular, is frequently accompanied with a gurgling noise. The blood varies in appearance, being at first of a bright-red color, and becoming gradually, as it diminishes in quantity, of a frothy character mixed with mucus. The discharge varies also, in quantity, from a slight to a very large amount. Sometimes the least cough

will cause an abundant flow, while at another, severe coughing will raise but little. Care must be taken not to confound this with Epistaxis, or a discharge of blood from the gums, tongue, or from slight wounds of the mouth; it does not seem very likely that such mistakes would occur, yet the error is possible.

The exciting causes of Haemoptysis, are various, such as, singing, dancing, over exertion, breathing of impure air, or vapours charged with acrid substances; falls, excessive mental emotion spirituous drinks; great loss of animal fluids; diseased state of the lungs. too great external heat. &c. Some persons have a greater predisposition to Haemoptysis

than others, and of these; ministers, lawyers, public speakers, musicians, millers, stone-cutters, miners, workers in metal, form probably the larger number. Some ladies by indulging in a false pride for tight lacing, render themselves particularly predisposed to this hæmorrhage, while others to whom nature, unaided by art, has given a deformed thorax, are equally liable to this alarming mishap. This hæmorrhage, as well as all other hæmorrhages, occurs most frequently between the age of puberty and the critical period, owing probably to the peculiar tendency to congestion during that time; and is more likely to occur in persons of a phthisical disposition, or

those of a plethoric habit.

The prognosis is rendered more or less favorable according to the age, sex and constitution of the patient; upon the amount discharged and the frequency with which the hæmorrhage takes place. When it occurs in a robust and healthy person of a good constitution, it is not necessarily dangerous, except indeed the attacks be severe and follow each other in rapid succession, the case may then be considered dangerous. It is also dangerous when occurring in slender, delicate persons, as then, if it does not of itself prove fatal, it produces a strong and decided tendency to phthisis.

In the treatment of Haemopto-
-tysis, one or more of the following
remedies, will be found indicated,
and will prove useful, only so far
as given in accordance with the
law of similitude. They are, Aconite,
Pulsatilla, Arsenicum, Sphecuantha,
Ferrum acet., Nux vomica, China, Phos-
toph., Phosphorus, Opium, Arnica.

The symptoms which point
more particularly to Aconite, are,
a sense of fullness, with burning, and
palpitation of the heart; anxiety and
restlessness, the restlessness worse on
lying down; the pulse is small, feeble
and wiry; the face pale and expres-
-sive of great anguish; the blood is
discharged in large quantities and

at short intervals. Aconite may also, when given in time, effectually shield the patient from hæmorrhage; the symptoms then indicating it, are, an accelerated pulse, with shivering, and palpitation of the heart, with a sensation as though the blood, in the chest, were boiling.

Those indicating Pulstilla, are, expectoration of dark coagulated blood, shivering particularly towards evening, or at night, pain in the lower part of the chest. It is also highly beneficial, in cases arising from suppression of menses. It is, also, especially suitable in obstinate cases, or when the patient is of a timid and phlegmatic temperament.

Arsenicum will be found useful, when the palpitation of the heart, and anguish, increase notwithstanding the administration of Aconite; or when there is a general dry burning heat, and great restlessness towards midnight.

Spasmodica is also, sometimes, of use after Aconite, when there is a taste of blood in the mouth, with nausea, weakness, and expectoration of blood-streaked mucus; or when the relief obtained from Arsenicum is not permanent.

In cases characterised by a slight hacking cough, causing the discharge of a small amount of pure, bright-red blood, with severe pain between

the shoulder blades, from which the patient is slightly relieved by motion, Ferrum acet. will be necessary.

Nux vomica is indicated by the following symptoms, particularly when they occur in patients of a lively and choleric temperament. Excessive tickling in the chest, with cough, which causes headache.

China is principally useful when the expectoration of blood is caused by rather severe coughing, which is at first hollow, and then becoming dry and painful; shivering alternating with flushes of heat; great weakness, and constant desire to lie down; trembling, and cloudiness of vision, with transient perspi-

=ration. China is also useful in removing the debility, which often remains after this disease.

Phust. is more particularly applicable to habitual haemoptysis, when the mind is exceedingly irritable, and there is considerable restlessness and timidity, and the discharges are very large and of a bright-red color.

Phosphorus is sometimes of importance in this disease especially when occurring in phthisical patients.

Opium is an invaluable remedy, as it often proves effectual in checking the most severe cases. The symptoms which indicate it,

are; expectorations of dark-looking coagulated blood. Dry hollow cough, which is much increased by swallowing, heat, trembling of the arms, stiffening, heart-burn, coldness of the extremities.

Arnica is an excellent remedy, when the hæmorrhage has been produced by a fall, a blow, or any mechanical injury, or when there is easy expectoration of dark coagulated blood, attended with palpitation of the heart, contractile pains in the chest, general heat, and syncope. It is indicated too, when the discharge is of a bright-red color mixed with clots of blood and mucus.